One of the cardinal sins in creating a PowerPoint presentation is putting too much information on a single slide. Cluttered slides are just hard to read, but it's pretty tedious creating new slides and cutting and pasting information to make them flow properly. There is a better way. Rather than cutting and pasting to create new slides, Microsoft PowerPoint offers a near-automated way to turn one over-crowded slide into two or more that are easy to read. This process is called "expanding" the slide.

First, open your presentation in Outline view. For PowerPoint 97 and prior, this will be an option on your View menu. In PowerPoint 2000, you can access Outline view from Normal view via the Outline view button, located at the bottom of the left-hand pane. In PowerPoint XP and 2003, you reach Outline view via a tab on the top of the left-hand pane.

Once you're in Outline view, you'll see what amounts to a schematic view of each slide in your presentation. Slides with too many bullet points or too much text will be very obvious. Find a slide that needs to be expanded, and click at the point where you want the break to occur. That will put an insertion point (denoted by a blinking line) at that location. Once your insertion point is set, you can expand your slides. In PowerPoint 97, choose Expand Slide from the Tools menu. In PowerPoint 2000, you can use the leftward-facing Promote arrow from the Outlining toolbar, which by default opens along the left side of the outline. And in PowerPoint XP and 2003, use the Decrease Indent button, found on the Formatting toolbar.

When you use any of these techniques, the bullet at the blinking line becomes the title of the next slide, and the bullets underneath it become that new title's bullet points. You can repeat this process as often as necessary to expand your crowded content onto an appropriate number of slides.